

- Urges DEC to Take Comprehensive Approach to Prevent Future Floods -

Goshen, NY – At a Flood Summit today hosted by U.S. Rep. John Hall (D-NY19) and Orange County Executive Edward Diana, Rep. Hall urged officials from the New York Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to come up with a comprehensive plan to prevent future flooding in the Wallkill River flood plain. Hall held the Flood Summit this morning at the Orange County Government Center to bring area residents, local farmers, and important stakeholders in the area to explore ways to reduce the devastating effect of future floods.

"The increasing frequency of storms and subsequent flooding makes it crucial that we work together now to develop plans to prevent future and potentially disastrous floods," said Hall.

The Flood Summit originated from the outcry of Black Dirt Region farmers who asked for action regarding the recent "50 Year Floods" that have occurred over the last three years, devastating property and affecting planting and harvesting of crops. After the large-scale flooding that occurred in the region during April 2007, when approximately six inches of rain had the impact in terms of damage of a much larger rainfall, many farmers claimed it was the poor condition of the river and its banks that allowed it to overflow and reach their properties. It was the third growing season in a row to be adversely affected by flooding in the region. After the flooding, Congressman Hall toured the region with local farmers to view the damage firsthand and bring attention to this matter.

"I'm pleased that this Flood Summit brought a renewed willingness from the DEC to work with me and the farmers to resolve the permitting and other issues," said Hall.

Presentations were given by representatives from the Wallkill River Drainage Association, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the DEC. At the Flood Summit, DEC Regional Director Willie Janeway pledged to renew DEC's commitment to work with residents, municipalities, and elected officials to address flooding concerns.